

Access to Supports Policy and Procedure

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that participants are supported to access appropriate services in a fair, transparent, and inclusive manner. It reflects SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd 's commitment to participant choice, autonomy, and meaningful engagement in decisions that affect their lives.

Our approach respects the dignity of risk, encourages individual expression, and promotes independence. We aim to ensure that all participants have access to accurate information about service access, assessment processes, and support planning, with opportunities to involve independent advocates where required. Participants are actively included in the development of supports that reflect their needs, preferences, and goals.

2.0 Scope

The policy applies to all staff involved in assessing, coordinating, and delivering supports. It covers all participants, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds, those with complex support needs, and those requiring advocacy or decision-making support.

3.0 Policy

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd is committed to providing access to supports in accordance with the NDIS Practice Standards (Rights and Responsibilities, Provision of Supports, and Service Access), the NDIS Code of Conduct, the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Participants will be informed of their rights to privacy, safety, dignity, advocacy, and complaints, and will be supported to understand and exercise these rights. All entry and eligibility information will be clearly communicated before any assessment or commencement of services.

The Manager or delegate must collect relevant information to determine whether participant needs can be met by SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd. Where services cannot be provided due to resource constraints, the Manager will:

- Identify any limitations or gaps in service delivery
- Explore interim or alternative arrangements, such as subcontracting or referral to another provider

- Ensure staff communicate all options to the participant respectfully and without delay

Participants will be involved in the assessment process, and any assessments will consider cultural, communication, and accessibility needs. Reasonable adjustments will be made to promote equitable participation.

Support planning must reflect the participant's goals and expressed preferences. Participants have the right to make informed decisions, even when such decisions involve dignity of risk. Supports will not be withdrawn solely on the basis of choices made, unless there is an unacceptable risk of harm.

In such cases, a collaborative approach will be used to review risks, involving the participant, their support network, and other providers to plan a safe and respectful transition.

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd provides accessible materials, including Easy Read documents, and ensures interpreter services are available during assessments to promote meaningful understanding and engagement. Assessment data will inform the development of a personalised support plan.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Access to supports

The Manager will inform the participant of the eligibility criteria to access our support services and associated costs for each service. Eligibility criteria for our NDIS services require the participant to currently hold a NDIS plan that lists access to our registration groups. We will review their NDIS plan to determine if synergy exists between the plan registration groups and our registration.

When the Director identifies a gap or an issue with support services, the new or existing participant will be provided with options determined by the current situation (see 3.0 Policy).

The Manager will determine if the participant requires our Easy Read documents, which outline details on the participant's rights, their voice in the development of their service agreement, how to make a complaint and how we will maintain their privacy. An interpreter will be provided if required by the participant.

Assessment will ensure that our organisation can supply the participant's services as required.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure participants can access and understand our service information, including by providing Easy Read materials, interpreters, or other communication supports. Where a participant requires support with decision-making, we will ensure access to advocacy services or a trusted representative to assist them.

4.2 Reasonable adjustment

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and NDIS Practice Standards, SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd makes reasonable adjustments to support equal access to services. These adjustments are aimed at respecting participants' dignity, privacy, and choice, and supporting their full participation in community life.

The NDIA devises a NDIS plan to address the participant's reasonable and necessary supports.

During the SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd 's assessment process to develop a Participant Support Plan, the Manager, or their delegate, will consult with the participant, their family, or advocate to make reasonable adjustments to the participant's support delivery environment. The reasonable adjustments are made to determine that the service provided is fit-for-purpose and that the change will support the participant's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence. Any modifications must be discussed and negotiated with all parties and recorded in the service agreement.

4.3 Withdrawal of services

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will not withdraw or deny support based solely on the dignity of risk made by the participant. Our organisation may withdraw support if:

- the participant fails to meet their requirements under their service agreement term
- the participant fails to comply with our policies and procedures
- the participant fails to communicate and provide information about changes to support needs
- workplace health and safety considerations are ignored
- communication has broken down between the SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd and the participant, family or advocate
- payment for support or expenses has not been received as per the Service Agreement

If service withdrawal is considered, we will provide participants with information about their rights to make a complaint, including how to contact the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Participants will also be offered access to independent advocacy services to assist them during this process.

Under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Terms of Business for Registered Providers, withdrawal or termination of services must be fourteen (14) days.

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will always work in the participant's best interest to achieve a safe transition to a new provider of services (see the Transition or Exit Policy and Procedure).

Upon termination of the service agreement by either party, SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will take steps to ensure:

- cancellation of the service has been reported to the National Disability Insurance Agency services that have been provided under the terms of the service agreement have been claimed
- alternative support solutions are in place for the participant's safety and well-being

During the withdrawal process, our organisation will follow the Transition and Exit Policy and Procedure requirements and ensure that:

- risks are reviewed to ensure the safety of the participant
- supports relevant to the participant are provided (such as the continuation of support services until transfer is arranged, an advocate, and new provider communication)
- clear withdrawal reasons are detailed
- communication strategies are developed with the new provider
- information is shared with the participant's consent

4.4 Assessment principles

- Assessment tools used are validated or considered 'best practice'
- The assessor understands and applies the principles of flexibility, validity and relevance to the assessment process

The assessment process promotes independence, including the following principles:

- determining the participant's abilities and difficulties
- setting expectations to create a balance between the participant's abilities and their need for support
- acknowledging the participant's support needs and ability to foster independence and goals in the service agreement

Assessments will be conducted using person-centred, trauma-informed, and culturally safe approaches that respect the participant's experiences, background, and preferences.

4.5 Undertaking assessments

Assessment interview time is negotiated with the participant, family and advocate. The designated staff members are to:

- invite the participant's representative/advocate to be present, if required or desired
- identify any special needs (e.g. provision of an interpreter or information in the participant's first language will be sourced)
- inform the participant of their rights, privacy, reporting mechanisms, communication methods, information management and access to their information,
- provide Easy Read documents, if required
- Contact the Manager to arrange an interpreter.

Consent will be obtained and all information collected will be securely stored and our Information Management Policy. Participants will be informed of their right to refuse or withdraw consent at any time.

During the assessment process, the staff member will inform the participant of their rights and responsibilities regarding:

- collection and use of personal information
- risk assessment processes and strategy development
- privacy and confidentiality considerations
- opt-out options from data collection
- complaints and feedback process
- incident management process
- advocacy options
- how to voice their opinions to management
- information-sharing requirements of the organisation

The assessment addresses the participant's health, privacy, dignity, risks, quality of life and independence needs. Information is recorded in the participant's records for future reflection. The Manager reviews all completed assessments.

4.6 Responsibility for assessments

Assessments will only be conducted by trained professionals with relevant qualifications and understanding of NDIS requirements, participant safeguarding, and cultural safety. The Manager will determine and delegate this responsibility.

Delegated staff must:

- review the intake form
- arrange for a risk assessment of individual and environment
- gain consent to speak to other professionals, family or carers
- seek input and feedback from the participant
- actively listen to participants and record their input
- work with the participant to determine goals, interests, needs and activities

4.7 Recording assessment information

The assessment is documented in a participant's file and management system. The interview and write-up times must be recorded against the participant in the management system.

Record data such as the Participant Intake Form, Participant Intake Checklist, Participant Information Consent Form, Individual Risk Assessment and Safe Environment Checklist - Home

5.0 Related documents

- Risk Assessment Form
- Individual Risk Assessment Profile
- Participant Information in Easy English
- Participant Intake Form
- Participant Intake Checklist
- Safe Environment Risk Assessment
- Support Plan
- Easy Read - Planning With You
- Participant Information Consent Form
- Safe Environment Checklist - Home
- Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Reportable Incident, Accident and Emergency Policy and Procedure
- Transition or Exit Policy and Procedure
- Advocacy Support Policy and Procedure

6.0 References

- Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Equal Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987
- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Commonwealth)
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Commonwealth)
- NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018
- NDIS Code of Conduct
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)